

STUDY ON MILY BALAKIREV'S PIANO SONATAS

by

Joohee Lee

Submitted to the faculty of the  
Jacobs School of Music in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree,  
Doctor of Music  
Indiana University  
July 2018

Accepted by the faculty of the  
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music,  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Music

Doctoral Committee

---

Arnaldo Cohen, Research Director

---

Arnaldo Cohen, Chair

---

Evelyne Brancart

---

David Cartledge

August 28, 2018

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	iii
List of Examples .....	iv
Chapter 1 : Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2 : Analysis of Sonata in B-flat minor (1856-57).....	9
Chapter 3 : Analysis of Sonata in B-flat minor (1905) .....	19
Chapter 4 : Analysis of Mazurkas.....	34
Chapter 5 : Conclusion.....	46
Bibliography .....	49

## List of Examples

Example 1. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 1–13.....	10
Example 2. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 38–43.....	11
Example 3. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 44–53.....	12
Example 4. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 67–80.....	13
Example 5. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 139–143.....	14
Example 6. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 198–207.....	15
Example 7. Third movement, 1856-57, mm. 1–13. ....	17
Example 8. Third movement, 1856-57, mm. 24–34. ....	17
Example 9. First movement, 1905, mm. 1–13. ....	19
Example 10. Tchaikovsky, 66 Russian Folk Songs, no. 43. ....	20
Example 11. Tchaikovsky, 66 Russian Folk Songs, no. 65. ....	20
Example 12. Georgian Song. ....	21
Example 13. First movement, 1905, mm. 26–31. ....	22
Example 14. First movement, 1905, mm. 39–44. ....	23
Example 15. First movement, 1905, mm. 48–54. ....	24
Example 16. First movement, 1905, mm. 65–72. ....	25
Example 17. First movement, 1905, mm. 139–145. ....	26
Example 18. First movement, 1905, mm. 151–153. ....	27
Example 19. First movement, 1905, mm. 163–170. ....	28
Example 20. Third movement, 1905, mm. 1–7. ....	29
Example 21. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 179–191. ....	30
Example 22. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 1–16. ....	30
Example 23. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 50–60. ....	31
Example 24. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 101–110. ....	31

Example 25. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 371–374.....	31
Example 26. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 33–38.....	32
Example 27. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 464–485.....	33
Example 28. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 68–79. ....	35
Example 29. Mazur, 1856-57, mm.100–124. ....	36
Example 30. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 289–308. ....	37
Example 31. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 213–220.....	38
Example 32. Mazur, 1856-57 mm. 47–67. ....	39
Example 33. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 47–59.....	39
Example 34. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 221–230.....	40
Example 35. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 236–245.....	40
Example 36. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 168–178. ....	41
Example 37. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 256–265.....	41
Example 38. Mazur, 1856-7, mm. 1–15. ....	42
Example 39. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 1–14.....	43
Example 40. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 53–57. ....	44
Example 41. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 60–74.....	44
Example 42. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 22–34. ....	45
Example 43. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 22–34.....	45

## Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation proposes to describe and analyze the piano sonatas by Mily Alexeyevich Balakirev (1837–1910). Among the three piano sonatas that are left in manuscripts (1855, 1856–57, 1905), the latest one was the only one that was completed and published. However, the second one was also published in 1948 and the earliest one remains unpublished. Although the research on these earlier sonatas is very scarce, they are significant works. All of these sonatas are written in B-flat major, to which Balakirev had a special affinity. Also, all of them had a Mazurka movement with the same thematic material, the first being the simplest, the last the most elaborate, virtuosic and highly effective. Comparing the earlier and the late Mazurkas will lead us to discover the stylistic and technical development of the piano music by Balakirev.

Balakirev, head composer of the Mighty Handful<sup>1</sup>, played a critical role in the development of musical nationalism in Russia in the mid-nineteenth century. Musical nationalism, a reaction to the prominence of German music in Western music history, began to rise during the late nineteenth century. Musical nationalists sought to express their identities through their traditional or folk music, rather than following German classical conventions. This movement was manifested in diverse areas of Europe, including Scandinavia, Bohemia, Hungary, and the Soviet Union. The new musical languages and styles emerging from these regions provided abundant melodic materials and fresh sounds to the Western art music tradition.

What is especially noteworthy about Russian nationalist music, compared to that of other regions, is that the Russian art music scene began to prosper, becoming one of the centers of Western art music, despite having been almost barren of classical music for centuries. Russian

---

<sup>1</sup> The Mighty Handful (1856 to 1870) played a critical role in the rise of Russian nationalism in music. Mily Balakirev was the leader, followed by César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Alexander Borodin and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. They composed music based on Russian folk songs and orientalism. Mussorgsky, especially, incorporated realism into his operas. The music by these composers was significant in the development of Russian music.

nationalists fought the prevailing forces of Western culture around St. Petersburg. During the nineteenth century, Russia was in the midst of a clash between Western European culture and local tradition. The Westernization began in the Russian court during the reign of Peter the Great in the early eighteenth century. Following his reign, a large number of artists and musicians from Germany, Italy, and France were invited to Russia. Their influences soon dominated Russian cultural venues. In response, some circles cultivated a yearning for Russian music and tradition. The tide of Westernization carried Russia into a period of self-awareness, which spurred the rise of nationalism, first in literature and then eventually in music.<sup>2</sup>

The Russian philosopher Nikolay Chernĭshevsky referred to Jean-Jacque Rousseau's theory of the "natural human," asserting that nature is the best form of human existence; therefore, folk song is the most authentic form of vocal music.<sup>3</sup> Under the influence of Rousseau and Chernĭshevsky, folk music practices began gaining public attention. An early member of the nationalist movement considered to be the "godfather of Russian music," Glinka composed an opera using folk song materials that were familiar to Russian audiences. The opera "A life for the Tsar" became an overnight sensation amongst Russian musicians. It was around this period when Russian nationalist music began to emerge in earnest, led by the literary figure Valdimir Stasov and his followers, known as the "Mighty Handful," of which Balakirev was the leader. Stasov argued that Russian music should absorb Oriental elements due to geographical advantage, and that it would be the new Russian composers' task to create a new idiom. Under the influence of the nationalism movement, Balakirev incorporated Russian folk song and orientalism into his works.

---

<sup>2</sup> Hans Rogger, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Walsh, *Musorgsky and His Circle: A Russian Musical Adventure* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 53.

The Mighty Handful's collaboration lasted from 1856 to 1870. It was around this period when Balakirev first attempted to compose his piano sonatas. His earliest attempt, which was dedicated to his admirer Mikhail Glinka, was written in 1855. Soon after, he composed another one, which was dedicated to one of the Mighty Handful's members, César Cui, in 1856-57. It is interesting that Balakirev tried to compose a sonata for piano solo, which is considered to be the essential musical form of Western music, around this period. The nationalistic works of the "Mighty Handful" were mostly focused on the larger genres, such as operas and symphonic works. Although these two sonatas were not completed, he finally published the Sonata in B-flat minor in 1905, only five years before his death. It is noteworthy that this sonata was the only piano sonata composed by anyone in the Mighty Handful.

It took about fifty years for Balakirev to come back to accomplish his long-cherished wish of completing the sonata. During this time period, Balakirev experienced major events that may have impacted his later musical style, which was much more personal and mature. Balakirev's "A collection of popular Russian songs" was published in 1866. Here, he arranged the accompaniment part for piano under the existing folk tunes. He embarked on a journey to Volga to collect the songs. He was captivated by their traditional melodies, drone accompaniment and, in particular, their oriental elements. This inspired Balakirev to compose *Islamey* and the symphonic poem *Tamara*.<sup>4</sup> Balakirev opened the door for incorporating Eastern musical influences into Russian instrumental music. His music has exotic melody lines, rhythmic patterns, folk-like ornamentations, and ostinato bass accompaniments that imitate the percussive drone, all of which are the characteristics of music in the Caucasus.

Balakirev experienced a serious identity crisis during 1870s and 80s.<sup>5</sup> For ten years, he disappeared from the music scene and he found his refuge in the Russian Orthodox Church. In

---

<sup>4</sup> Edward Garden, *Balakirev: A Critical Study of His Life and Music* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1967), 89.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.



1883, he got offered a job serving as the music director at the Orthodox Church Imperial Chapel. From then on, he gradually started to compose again. It was around this period that he met his pupil Sergei Lyapunov, to whom his sonata (1905) was dedicated.

Compared to the earlier sonatas, the sonata from 1905 has several elements that stand out, including folklore elements, orientalism, an organic structure, variations on the repeated patterns, virtuosic qualities and at the same time, an introspective quality. Before moving into the analysis of the sonatas, I would like to remark on these three sonatas' titles and provide a brief explanation for each in order to clarify their distinction.

Based on Mily Balakirev's manuscripts, only three pieces are titled "Sonata."

- 1) Sonata in B-flat minor, "Grand Sonata," (op. 3), 1855. Unpublished/Unfinished.

Dedicated to Mikhail Glinka

- I. Allegro feroce
- II. Mazurka
- III. Larghetto
- IV. Finale: Allegro
- V. Epilogue: Fuga – left unfinished

- 2) First Sonata in B-flat minor, op. 5, 1856-57. Published in 1949/Unfinished.

Dedicated to César Cui

- I. Andante – Allegro assai, feroce
- II. Mazur: Tempo di mazurka
- III. Andante

Left unfinished. No finale.

- 3) Sonata in B-flat minor, 1900-1905. Published in 1905 by Musikverlag Zimmermann, Leipzig, 1905.

Dedicated to Sergei Lyapunov

- I. Andantino

- II. Mazurka: Moderato
- III. Intermezzo: Larghetto
- IV. Finale: Allegro non troppo, ma con fuoco

These sonatas have some similarities in that all were written in B-flat minor, and all have a Mazurka in the second movement. The Mazurkas share an identical theme, the earliest one being the most primitive and simple, and the last one from 1905 being much more elaborate and refined. Among these three, the only sonata that was completed and published in Balakirev's lifetime was the one composed in 1905.

The first one was never published and it is left as a manuscript. Therefore, the accessibility to the actual score is very limited. However, the Grove dictionary and many editions discuss the manuscript of this sonata in the editorial comments. The Grove dictionary refers to this sonata as an early "Bol'shaya sonata, op. 3" (Grand Sonata). However, one should be cautious about this opus number, since Balakirev's Octet, written in 1855-56, was published in Moscow in 1959 with the title of Octet, op. 3.

More detailed information about this sonata can be found in the editorial comment in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniĭ Dliā Fortepiano*, edited by K. Sorokin.<sup>6</sup> It indicates that a draft sketch manuscript of the previous youth sonata was preserved as four completed parts and a draft of the fifth part with a fugue epilogue.

On the other hand, in the editorial comment, Valery Yerokhin mentions the epigraph that Balakirev inserted on the manuscript of this piece in *Russkaĭa Fortepiannaĭa Muzyka* (Collection for Russian Piano Music).

My soul, as if it were an ocean,  
Enshrines the wreckage of my hopes.

---

<sup>6</sup> K. Sorokin, ed., *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniĭ Dliā Fortepiano*, (Moscow: Gos. muzykal'noe izd-vo, 1951).

This epigraph is from one of Balakirev's favorite poets, Mikhail Lermontov, whose poems were often used in Balakirev's songs.

The most direct way to access this unpublished sonata would be through the recording by Nicholas Walker, which is the world première recording that he recorded in 2012.<sup>7</sup> Walker recorded the sketch of the last fugal epilogue as well. Interestingly, the subject of the fugal epilogue was derived from the Mazurka movement, which Balakirev reused in all of his sonatas. The sonata composed in 1856-57 was published in 1951 in Moscow. This sonata has three movements, and the finale was never completed. In this edition, this sonata has the title listed as First Sonata, op. 5. It is not clear whether the word "First" comes from Balakirev's autograph or the editor Sorokin. Although this was not his first-written sonata, the earliest one was never published. Brehda insists that this may come from the editor to differentiate it from the sonata that was written in 1905. Having said that, the earliest sonata was never published, and therefore, this sonata is the first one among the published ones.<sup>8</sup> Walker insists that Balakirev himself named this as his first sonata. Also, according to Sorokin, the date of this composition (1856 or 1857) is not determined, but a supposition based on Balakirev's note that this sonata is dedicated to César Antonovich Cui, whom he met around that period. Scholars such as Brehda and Yerokhin name these three sonatas as Sonatas no. 1–3. Therefore, when Sonata no. 1 or the First sonata is referenced, checking the compositional date would be helpful in order to avoid confusion.

Balakirev encountered a music publisher, Zimmermann, in 1899 in St. Petersburg.<sup>9</sup> Thanks to this publisher, Balakirev's first symphony was published soon after. This acquaintance may have led to Balakirev's prolific number of solo piano compositions. Balakirev's late piano

---

<sup>7</sup> Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich and Nicholas Walker. *Complete Piano Works*. 1. [S.l.]: Grand Piano, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Vera Brehda, *The Original Solo Piano Works of Mily Balakirev* (University of Washington, 1983), 83.

<sup>9</sup> Garden, *Balakirev*, 147.

works were mostly written between 1900 and 1908 and all were published by Zimmermann, and his last sonata was one of them, published in 1905. The refined version of the Mazurka, which is used in second movement, was actually completed in 1900 and was published separately as Mazurka no. 5 by Zimmermann. In addition, Balakirev published his Scherzo no. 2 in B-flat minor in 1900 as well, and this piece adapted the secondary theme of the first movement from his sonata in 1856-57.

His last sonata was published in New York by International Music in 2003. And curiously, in this version, this sonata was titled the Sonata in B-flat minor, op. 102. This opus number is spurious because this is not from Balakirev's manuscript or the first edition. This may come from the editor Oxana Yablonskaya; therefore, performers should consider this opus number carefully.

Also, as a counterpart to the "First Piano Sonata, op. 5" written in 1856-57, the latest sonata is sometimes referenced inappropriately as his "Second" Sonata, or Sonata no. 2.

In his editorial comment, Yerokhin quotes Balakirev's letter written to a music critic. Sergei Bulich, in 1903:<sup>10</sup>

"You want me to compose a sonata. I'd like you to know that it is precisely what I myself wish for—yes, it's my own intention from my young days; but try as I would, I never could translate this dream of mine into reality. In former times, I did busy myself in writing a sonata, in B flat minor; more than once did I attempt to recompose it—every time to my discontent."

As the letter implies, Balakirev's attempts to write a piano sonata started from his early period in the 1850s, and these attempts were left incomplete. It took him about fifty years to finally accomplish his aim. However, except for the Mazurka movement, it is difficult to find thematic similarities between these earlier sonatas and the last one. Therefore, the last one should not be considered as the revised version of the older ones. In addition, as seen above, the first

---

<sup>10</sup> Chernov, K. N., *M. A. Balakirev (in Reminiscences and Letters)* (Muzykalnaya letopis, III, Leningrad-Moscow, 1925) p. 245.

edition of his sonata written in 1905 has the title simply marked “Sonata in B-flat minor.” When we discuss Balakirev’s “piano sonata,” we usually refer to the third one. However, we should remember that the second one was published afterwards under the name “First sonata in B-flat minor.” This title may raise confusion while distinguishing the three sonatas in terms of key signature and the chronology. Therefore, in this essay, I will specify the three sonatas according to their compositional dates. Unfortunately, it is not easy to access his first piano sonata. Thus, in this study I will mainly focus on exploring each movement of Balakirev’s sonatas written in 1856-57 and 1905 and compare the differences in style and formal structure to discover the stylistic change in Balakirev’s music.

In this analysis, I will provide an analysis focused on the formal structure in each of the movements of both sonatas, along with a detailed analysis of elements such as the harmonic style, rhythmic patterns, melodic style, cadential pattern, and so forth. Balakirev’s deviation from the conventional sonata form will reveal his originality. In the fourth chapter, I will provide an extensive comparison among the Mazurka movements and focus on Balakirev’s stylistic change. The last chapter will conclude my study.

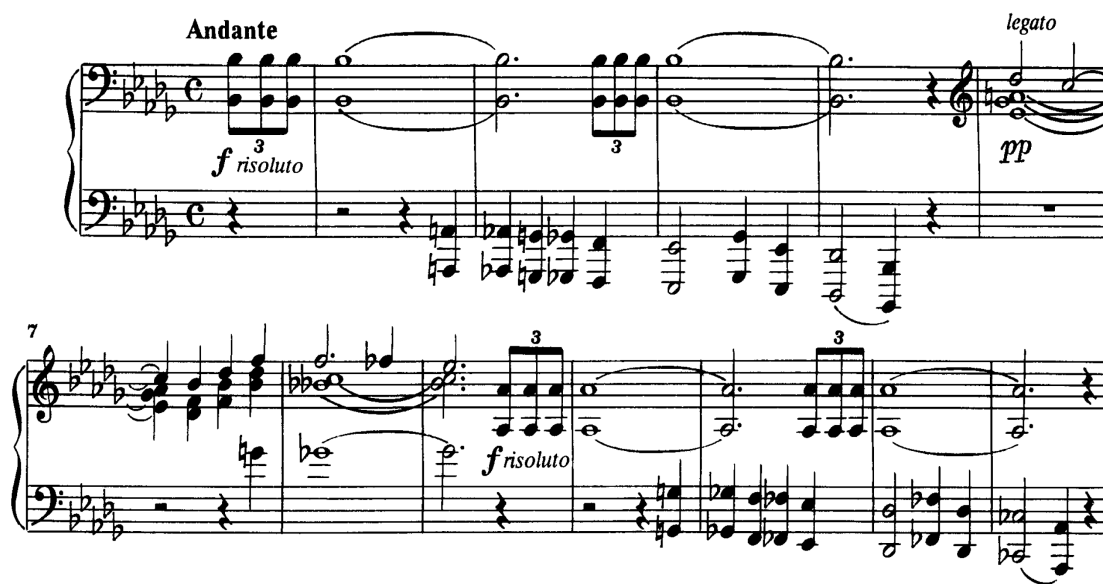
## Chapter 2: ANALYSIS OF SONATA IN B-FLAT MINOR (1856-57)

### First Movement

The first movement starts with a slow introduction. This introduction contains three main motives. These motives need detailed discussion because these motives are repeatedly used throughout the piece. The introduction foreshadows the exposition, where these motives form the primary theme in an economical format. Also, the introduction part is partially recapitulated in the recapitulation section. Finally, these motives are used at the end of the exposition and recapitulation, summing up the movement.

The piece opens with striking octaves articulating the tonic in a triplet rhythm. I would call this motive a ‘triplet rhythm’ motive. The B-flat octave is then held in longer notes for seven beats. The next motive is presented with a descending chromatic bass line that seems to collapse from the B-flat of the triplet rhythm motive to E-flat from mm. 2–4 (1–3). I would name this the ‘chromatic’ motive. The chromatic motive is one of the core elements that forms the whole movement. It is used in the primary theme (m. 44). Also, by using chromatic passages repeatedly, Balakirev develops the piece and raises the tension. When used in transitional sections, these chromatic octaves become a convenient tool to transpose to other tonalities. This is followed by a cadential motion leading the phrase to a tonic cadence, aligning with the B-flat octave held with the right hand. A contrasting motive is presented in mm. 6–9. The  $\text{vii}^\circ$  chord with a 4-3 suspension is followed by an upward motion, which I will name the ‘upward’ motive.

This introduction strongly alludes to the opening of the Liszt Sonata in B minor, S. 178. Both sonatas start with the tonic presented in bare, repeated octaves, both of which are held in the next measure. Another line overlaps with the held tonic, which descends in quarter notes, starting from scale degree 7 and eventually arrives on the lower register tonic.



**Example 1. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 1–13.<sup>11</sup>**

In contrast to Liszt's sonata that shifts to the Allegro section immediately after a brief introduction, Balakirev repeats these motives several times in different tonalities. Firstly, all 8 bars are repeated in A-flat minor, then in G-flat minor, and G major, where the chromatic motive is omitted. Balakirev comes back to B-flat minor in the following measure, where this time the chromatic motive is greatly extended (mm. 25–43), building up the tension through dominant pedal that eventually leads to the exploding exposition in B-flat minor, starting in m. 44. It is interesting to observe Balakirev's deliberate modulation using the chromatic motive in this passage.

The descending chromatic line presented in mm. 2–3 has four successive chromatic notes and lands on E-flat, skipping the E. However, in mm. 27–28, Balakirev arrives on the E natural, creating a strong diminished chord that leads to the dominant pedal in mm. 34–43. In this passage, Balakirev presents the chromatic motive repeatedly and in counterpoint. Also, he gradually subjects the motive to rhythmic diminution, which creates the natural accelerando to the

---

<sup>11</sup> This edition counted the first incomplete measure as 1. To avoid confusion, I will follow the measure number of the score.

Allegro that follows.

38

accel.

40

42

*f*

*attacca l'allegro*

**Example 2. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 38–43.**

The primary theme contains the compact version of the three motives presented in the introduction (Ex. 3).



44 **Allegro assai feroce**

49

**Example 3. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 44–53.**

Balakirev's tendency to use the descending chromatic motive is noticeable in the transition as well. In mm. 66-68, the bass line moves from F-flat to C chromatically, which functions as a transition to the dominant chord of D-flat major. The dominant pedal is prolonged while the repeated chromatic motive drives the piece forward, similar to the technique used in the introduction (Ex. 4).

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 67-70) shows a piano introduction with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The second system (mm. 71-75) continues the piano introduction. The third system (mm. 76-80) is marked *Meno mosso* and *pp con espressione*, showing a transition to a new key signature with a tie between the final note of the first system and the first note of the second system.

**Example 4. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 67–80.**

The dominant pedal seems to prepare the transition to the secondary theme in D-flat major, the relative major. However, Balakirev rewrites the key signature completely and moves to E major, which is neither the relative major (III) nor the dominant (V) as would be expected in conventional sonata forms, but somewhere in between; it is an augmented fourth above B-flat. It is interesting to see how Balakirev connects these two remote keys. Balakirev places four successive A-flats by themselves, arpeggiated over four octaves. The last A-flat is connected to the first note of the secondary theme with a tie. By using the enharmonic transition, this A-flat is notated as G-sharp, the mediant of E major. Balakirev's attempt to link these two sections is clever and instinctive. Firstly, due to the mechanism of the piano as an instrument, the higher the octave, the lower the volume. Also, as the pianist holds the note, the sound gradually decays.

With the last A-flat, held for six beats, Balakirev writes a natural decrescendo. It is curious to note that Balakirev did not put any dynamic markings between the *ff* in m. 68 and the *pp* in m. 76. In addition, while the four A-flats are played, Balakirev avoids inserting any chords that would help cushion the sudden clash of sounds between the previous A-flat dominant pedal sonority and the dominant of E major in m. 76.

The secondary theme also has descending and ascending stepwise motions, but using whole tones. The secondary theme is repeated in the middle voice with flourishing ornamentations in the upper voice. Chromaticism and sudden shifts to the other tonality are avoided in this section until m. 104, where ascending chromatic scales break in, leading to the deceptive cadence in m. 112. The closing idea is mainly composed of the chromatic motive and upward motive that Balakirev successively transposes to various keys, eventually arriving on C-sharp minor – the relative minor of E major – in m. 128. The triplet rhythm motive returns at the end of the exposition.



**Example 5. First movement, 1856-57, mm.139–143.**

The chromatic motive is rhythmically augmented (doubling the note values) in mm. 140-142. Instead of octaves, Balakirev uses the interval of a tenth. Following the chromatic line, the bass drops down to E-sharp, ending the exposition with a C-sharp major chord.

Similar to the transition from the primary theme section to the secondary theme section, the development section also starts with the common note C-sharp, alluding to A minor while keeping the same key signature, containing four sharps.

The development section is a debate between the contrasting secondary theme (whole tone) and primary theme (chromatic), which integrate together in the end. At the beginning these two ideas are presented in alternation. Then the development imitates the structure of the exposition, while the themes are kept in their primary forms, which almost looks like a recapitulation with the exception of its constant shifts in tonality. The two themes appear to integrate when the secondary theme is ornamented with chromatic scales in m. 184.

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system begins at measure 198 and ends at measure 202. The second system begins at measure 203 and ends at measure 207. The tempo is marked 'Maestoso' above the first system. The dynamics include 'ff' (fortissimo) in the first system. The music is written for piano, with treble and bass staves. It features complex chromatic and whole-tone patterns, with various ornaments and slurs. The key signature changes throughout the passage.

**Example 6. First movement, 1856-57, mm. 198–207.**

Finally, the two themes are actually integrated in m. 200. The secondary theme is presented in the right hand while the chromatic motive is presented in the left hand and modified upward motive in m. 203. Then a grand climax (*Grandioso*) follows in D-flat major in mm. 208–221, which is interrupted by the triplet rhythm. The recapitulation starts with a simplified introduction in B-flat minor.

The recapitulation section faithfully follows the exposition except for a brief extension of a passage in the primary theme transition, as if to compensate for the omitted introduction. Here, Balakirev follows the traditional sonata form key relationship in which the secondary theme is

presented in D-flat major, and the whole sonata ends in B-flat major in the same manner as the exposition.

Balakirev's bold use of key relationships, shown in this sonata form from his early era, is very novel. Balakirev's thematic material is often presented in long, lyrical phrases. It is typical of Balakirev that this melody is repeated in different tonalities with sudden and frequent shifts. As shown in this example, the transition to another key may be very remote from the home key, which may provide a pleasant surprise. However, Balakirev's transitions have also been criticized for their lack of smoothness and connection. Relatively more organic and smoother transitions are found in his later pieces.

One example of his refined transitions can be found in his *Scherzo* no. 2, composed in 1900 and written in the same key signature. Balakirev borrows the secondary theme of the 1856 sonata's first movement (the sonata had not yet been published). Balakirev starts in B-flat minor and cadences in D-flat major in the first part. Then by using the enharmonic note D-flat, Balakirev moves on to the transition, which repeats the primary idea in C-sharp minor. However, the key signature has two sharps, as if to foreshadow the dominant of the B minor chord at the end of the section. The sonata's secondary theme follows. Here, he presents the theme in D major, which is the relative major of the previous tonality. It is also a major third above the home key, which is relatively closer than the augmented fourth that appeared in the first sonata. This example shows the refined transition structures in Balakirev's later work. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter by comparing the Mazurka of each sonata.

### **Third Movement**

The third movement is a simple Andante, written in a chorale texture in G-flat Major. Overall, it is in a binary form. The primary theme (mm. 1-8) has a chordal texture.



**Example 7. Third movement, 1856-57, mm. 1-13.**

The D-flat pedal arrives on the secondary dominant chord of G-flat. In the transition to the secondary theme, Balakirev uses a similar technique to that shown in the first movement. The D-flat pedal enharmonically becomes C-sharp and the key signature is changed to three sharps, moving to F-sharp minor. The relationship between the home key, G-flat, is again an enharmonic one.



**Example 8. Third movement, 1856-57, mm. 24-34.**

Balakirev moves to a cadence on A major when the theme is repeated the second time. In the transition, Balakirev moves back to G-flat major again by using the enharmonic note (C-sharp and D-flat). This section ends with the vii° chord of G-flat, leading back to the primary theme that

Balakirev repeats in G-flat major from mm. 58-74. A short contrapuntal passage appears from mm. 74-81.

The A' part starts in m. 82 in G-flat major. The transition uses a B-flat pedal, which leads to E-flat minor, the relative minor of the home key in the secondary theme (m. 103).

## Chapter 3: ANALYSIS OF SONATA IN B-FLAT MINOR (1905)

### First movement

From the first moment of the composition, Balakirev shakes up the structure in an unusual way, which is to have a fugue as the first movement. Although including a fugue movement in a piano sonata is quite common, structurally, it usually appears in the last movement and very rarely in the first. The movement starts with a three-voice fugue. The subject in the alto voice that lasts for eight measures contains the ornaments and rhythmic structure that strongly allude to folk song materials (Ex. 10 and 11), especially to Russian orientalism (Ex. 12). It is noteworthy that oriental characteristics are not present in his previous sonatas. Balakirev may have collected this new idea while staying in Caucasus in 1862, 1863 and 1868. Balakirev's Russian orientalism is well represented in his song titled Georgian Song written in 1863. Interestingly, the melodic line of this song has many similarities with the fugue subject of his sonata, such as the ornaments, rhythmic figures and melodic contours. Orientalism is certainly one of the most notable features of his works, such as *Islamey*, *Tamara*, and also his *Piano Sonata*, 1905.



Example 9. First movement, 1905, mm. 1–13.



## ПРОТЯЖНАЯ

(Козловского уезда, села Казинок)

Медленно (Andante)

Музыкальный фрагмент, состоящий из вокальной и фортепианной партий. Темп: Медленно (Andante). Ключ: два flats (B-flat and E-flat). Метр: 4/4. Вокальная партия имеет следующие тексты: "За - бо - ту и - ме ю, толь лю. би - ти мне мо - лод - чи - ка, И - ли".

Example 10. Tchaikovsky, 66 Russian Folk Songs, no. 43.

## ПРОТЯЖНАЯ

(Касимовского уезда, деревни Ибердус)

Очень умеренно (Molto moderato)

Музыкальный фрагмент, состоящий из вокальной и фортепианной партий. Темп: Очень умеренно (Molto moderato). Ключ: два flats (B-flat and E-flat). Метр: 4/4. Вокальные партии обозначены как "1й голос" и "2й голос". Текст песни: "1. Го - ры вы мо - и, ни - че - го вы, Ни - че - го не по - ро - ди - ли, го - ры, ни - че - го не по - ро - ди - ли,".

Example 11. Tchaikovsky, 66 Russian Folk Songs, no. 65.

**Molto moderato**

The musical score is for a piece titled "Molto moderato". It consists of a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part is written in 3/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic pattern in the right hand, often with triplets and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The vocal line is in Russian and includes the following lyrics:

He пой, кра - са - ви - ца, при мне ты  
 Ne роу, kra - sa - vi - tsa, pri mne ti

пе - сен<sup>s</sup> Гру - зи - и пе - чаль - ной: на - по - ми - на - ют мне о - не  
 ре - sen Gru - zi - i pe - chal' - noy: na - po - mi - na - yut mne o - ne

The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). The piano part has a rich, textured sound with many chords and arpeggios.

### Example 12. Georgian Song.

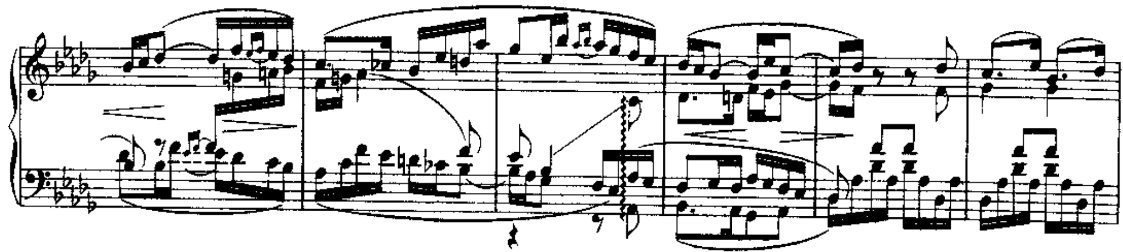
Garden points out that the contrapuntal patterns exhibited in this movement are more like mosaic patterns found in the Eastern orthodox churches.<sup>12</sup> Although Balakirev's fugue may be an homage to Bach's music as many other piano sonata fugue movements draw heavy influences from Bach, Balakirev uniquely composed his piece by starting his sonata with an oriental fugue.

It is interesting to see how Balakirev deals with the key relationships. Compared to the sudden shift of tonalities in his earlier sonatas, here he deals with his transitions in a much more skillful and deliberate way. What is noticeable in this sonata is his attempt to organize the whole

<sup>12</sup> Garden, *Balakirev*, 237.

sonata in an organic way. His transitions from one section to another avoid a definite cadence on the tonic chord. Balakirev particularly favors linking the previous and the following sections by using the secondary dominant chord of the key that follows. Also, one of Balakirev's favorite techniques, transitioning from flat keys to sharp keys using the enharmonic note, is also noticeable here, but as he matured this practice became much more indirect and deliberate.

The subject is presented in B-flat minor, which meets the real answer and the contrapuntal line in m. 9. Then the subject is restated in the bass line in the home key, again following the standard tonal structure of a fugue.

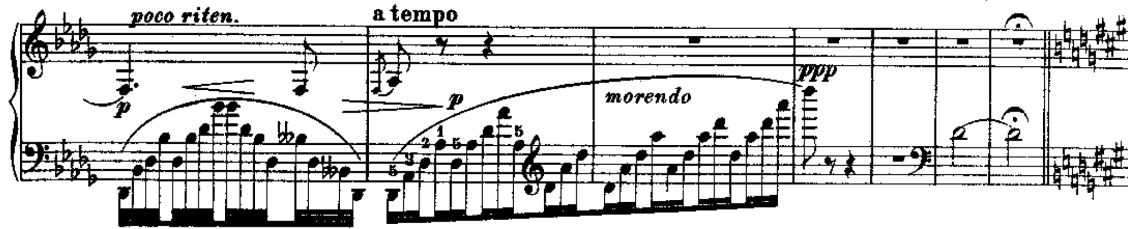


**Example 13. First movement, 1905, mm.26–31.**

In the passage linking to the secondary theme, Balakirev prepares the cadence in D-flat major, which is the tonal center of the secondary theme. Before arriving on the secondary V/D-flat major, in m. 29, Balakirev places A-flat in the melodic line in m. 27 which leads to the dominant of D-flat major, the relative major of the home key.

An obsessive D-flat pedal appears throughout the entire secondary theme section from mm. 31-54. Above the arpeggiated left hand, Balakirev presents a short secondary theme lasting for two measures. This is immediately repeated in an elaborated form. While the secondary theme is modified into an elaborated running passage, the primary theme joins it in the middle voice, then this passage is expanded into a canon between the upper voice and the middle voice. The theme alternates between B-flat minor and G-flat major, which enhances the link between the sections in terms of the tonal structure.





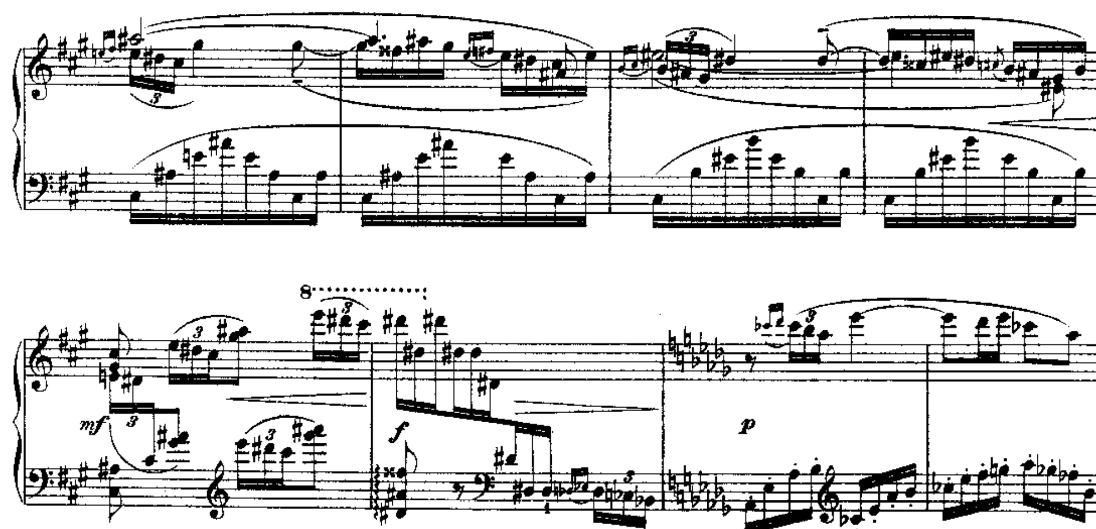
**Example 15. First movement, 1905, mm. 48–54.**

The development section (mm. 55-98) is concise and has a well-structured tonal scheme.

The development section is composed of three sections:

- 1) mm. 55-70
- 2) mm. 71-86, which has a parallel structure where the first half states the fragment of the fugal subject, and the latter half has the dominant pedal, which is pushed up by a whole tone in the very last measure that eventually leads to the secondary dominant chord, and
- 3) mm. 87–95, which is a short flourishing cadenza that has a cadence on the dominant of the B-flat, preparing the recapitulation. This coda returns in the fourth movement as a coda, adding the cyclic idea to the sonata.

All three of them end in half cadences that prepare the next section. It is interesting to observe the overall tonal scheme of this development and how it leads F-sharp minor back to B-flat minor. Balakirev's use of enharmonics has become much more discreet and skillful.



**Example 16. First movement, 1905, mm. 65–72.**

The first section states the fragment of the subject presented in F-sharp minor. Then in the latter half, the fragmented subjects alternate between the two upper voices in contrapuntal writing while the bass line has the ostinato-like movement, as seen in the secondary theme with the C-sharp dominant pedal. At the very end of the section, this C-sharp is eventually pushed up to D-sharp in m. 70. This D-sharp functions as the dominant chord of the following section (mm. 71–86), where the fugal fragments are restated in A-flat minor and elaborated with walking bass lines. Following the same harmonic structure as the first section, this section also lands on a dominant pedal where the E-flat is prolonged, finally pushing up to F major, which foreshadows the return to B-flat minor.

Thus, the key signature moves from F-sharp (or G-flat) – A-flat – B-flat. By this ascending whole tone structure, and subtly using the enharmonic notes, Balakirev enhances the key relationship between the sections and avoids the sudden shift from one to the other.

Up to this point, the tonal scheme seems logical and familiar. Balakirev's unusual choice of key appears in the secondary theme of the recapitulation. Balakirev establishes G-flat major in the secondary theme, which is the submediant of the original key. This occasion happens very rarely, especially in the recapitulation of a minor key sonata. In order to make this transition logical,

in the link between the primary theme and the secondary theme, Balakirev sneaks his fugal subject fragment into E-flat minor, the subdominant of B-flat. And with the same method used in the exposition, E-flat minor arrives on the relative major, G-flat major.

The G-flat pedal is sustained all the way through the secondary theme, until it is pushed up to B-flat major in the closing section in m. 142. The key signature switches completely to B-flat major. The D natural octave in m. 142, where the listeners expect the D-flat, provides a surprise following the fugal fragment pedal. The B-flat chord encounters swirling chords in hemiola that drive to another D in m. 144, which seems to emphasize B-flat major.



**Example 17. First movement, 1905, mm. 139–145.**

Balakirev brings back a similar texture to the one he used in the development section. The ostinato bass has a B-flat pedal while the upper two voices present the fugal fragments alternatively. The oriental sonority is intensified in m. 152 through the improvisatory rhythmic pattern of the right hand and the dissonance (clash between A-flat and A).



**Example 18. First movement, 1905, mm. 151–153.**

Balakirev sets up the final cadence of this movement in the last ten measures. In the overall scheme, he establishes pairs of coexisting tonalities (usually major and minor) in an alternating pattern within the sustained dominant pedal. The coda is no exception. In the first beat of m. 161, Balakirev writes a definite cadence in B-flat major. However, with the crescendo going towards the second beat, and with the tenuto sign, Balakirev emphasizes the dominant pedal, whereas in the bass, an unexpected D-flat is pronounced, which seems to allude to the preceding G-flat major. In the following beat, this D-flat immediately resolves to the B-flat major tonic. The sudden appearance of D-flat reminds us of the surprising D natural in m. 142. This ambivalent G-flat major-alluding chord keeps alternating with the B-flat major tonic in pairs, until a definite dominant seventh chord of G-flat major appears in the bass along with the arpeggiated diminished seventh in m. 165. It eventually resolves back to B-flat major, in which Balakirev ends the movement.





**Example 19. First movement, 1905, mm. 163–170.**

This G flat-alluding chord may be analyzed as a modified dominant chord of B-flat major, by the fact that this is played with the dominant pedal (F), which leads to the V-I cadence in a broad scheme. At the same time, by using the F pedal as the pivot note of the G-flat major dominant chord and the B-flat major tonic, Balakirev builds the repeated tension and release, creating the close relationship between the two. Through Balakirev's attempt, this recapitulation consists of diverse keys, which start from B-flat minor and travel through a brief E-flat minor, G-flat major, and finally, the parallel major of the home key.

It is evident that this first movement of Balakirev's mature work has various characteristics. It is written in a three-voice fugue form based on Russian folk song material, having ornamented notes that provide orientalism and the long pedal point with its ostinato bass line, smoother transitions, the cadenza that returns in the fourth movement, and the unexpected G-flat major paired with B-flat major in the recapitulation. These characteristics construct Balakirev's unique tonal scheme and structural scheme in organic form, and they establish Balakirev's personal freedom and logic within the sonata form.

### Third movement

The third movement is a simple intermezzo. It ends in a half cadence, proceeding *attacca* into the finale. How this movement functions as a bridge from the Mazurka to the finale is interesting. The intermezzo is composed of four sections, ABA'B'. Additionally, it starts with a V4-3 chord of D major, which was the key of the previous movement. The bass line of each section drops down chromatically from A to A-flat, G, and then G-flat throughout the sections, ending on F in a half cadence so that it naturally lands on our home key, B-flat minor, when we arrive at the finale in the fourth movement. The A section returns in the development section of the following fourth movement, which also intensifies the sonata's cyclic form. Balakirev uses a very rare time signature: 12/16. This is the device he uses to compensate for the difference between the Larghetto of the intermezzo and the Allegro of the fourth movement, which is written in 2/4. The A section is notated twice as slowly as the Larghetto.

The image displays the first seven measures of the third movement. The top system, measures 1-3, is marked 'Larghetto. M.M. ♩ = 108.' and 'pp'. It features a piano introduction with a chromatic bass line. A note below the staff reads 'Il ritmo nella mano sinistra sempre marcato'. The bottom system, measures 4-7, is marked 'cantabile' and 'mf'. It continues the melodic and harmonic development, with the bass line maintaining its chromatic descent.

Example 20. Third movement, 1905, mm. 1–7.



**Example 21. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 179–191.**

#### **Fourth movement**

The primary theme of this finale is written in a concise form. The motive descends stepwise with simple quarter notes. This descending line, along with the grace notes and accented second beat on m. 3, are typical patterns found in Russian folk song. The primary theme is kept simple, which is repeated one octave higher, then it turns into an ascending stepwise motion. It is the accompaniment part that creates the mobility with its syncopated chords, which alternate quickly between B-flat minor and D-flat major.



**Example 22. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 1–16.**

This primary theme pattern with the syncopated accompaniment is used obsessively throughout the piece. However, Balakirev deliberately modifies it in various ways by breaking

them into sixteenth notes (Ex. 20), modifying it into a lyrical character (Ex. 21), and building a climax in the recapitulation with a thick texture and martellato technique, the typical technique of Balakirev, which we can also find in his *Islamey* (Ex. 21).



Example 23. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 50–60.



Example 24. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 101–110.



Example 25. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 371–374.

The secondary theme, which uses relatively more active rhythmic patterns, is presented in m. 33. In contrast to the primary theme, it starts on a D-flat major sonority that cadences in B-flat minor. It is then elaborated while the theme is presented in the middle voice, another technique that is typical of Balakirev.



**Example 26. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 33–38.**

After a brief presentation of the secondary theme (mm. 33–52), Balakirev greatly extends the primary theme material, as seen in Ex. 20 and Ex. 21. (mm. 53–182). As seen in Ex. 21, the theme is presented in D major, and it is developed and expanded in octaves and chords with arpeggiated accompaniment until it arrives at the closing section. Thus, in its overall structural scheme, the simple secondary theme functions similarly to the linking passage, leading to the lyric primary theme section that functions as a secondary theme section.

The development, which is the representation of the intermezzo A section (Ex.18), is short. The recapitulation begins with the secondary theme on a B minor cadence, which is a half step up from the home key. After the lyrical primary theme is recapitulated in D-flat major, the primary theme repeatedly appears in various keys. It drives the piece into the eventual recapitulation of the first theme in m. 372 (Ex. 22).

The musical score is written for piano and bass. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The time signature is 8/8. The first system shows a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand, ending with a *poco ritard.* marking. The second system begins with *Poco meno mosso.* and features a *p* dynamic in the right hand and a *pp* dynamic in the left hand. The third system continues the melodic development, ending with a *poco a poco ritard. al fine* marking and a *pp* dynamic, concluding with a final cadence marked *ppp*.

**Example 27. Fourth movement, 1905, mm. 464–485.**

This movement's close strongly alludes to the first movement. This similarity is most notable in mm. 465–466, where the dominant seventh of G-flat major appears, followed by a coda that is similar to the cadenza from the first movement. Also, the final cadence of this movement is the same as the first movement, ending the sonata in B-flat major.

## Chapter 4: ANALYSIS OF MAZURKAS

This chapter will focus on the two Mazurka movements: the Mazur from the Sonata in B-flat minor, 1856-57 and the Mazurka from the Sonata in B-flat minor, 1905. Although these two movements have an identical theme, it is clear that the 1905 version is much more elaborate and mature in terms of style and musical technique. These changes and developments are also apparent in other movements of the sonata from 1905 compared to the earlier ones. However, considering the fact that Balakirev always kept this Mazurka movement in all of his sonatas, and that a more direct one-to-one comparison is thus possible, I will focus on the characteristic features found in his Mazurkas in order to explain how he formed his personal musical style and applied it into a sonata movement.

Before discussing the difference, I will start with a general analysis of these two mazurka movements. The overall structures of these two mazurkas are similar. They share two identical main themes, along with an introduction and a coda that contains a long D pedal in the bass. The primary theme is presented in D major, whereas the secondary theme is in B-flat major. These two themes are repeatedly used in varied forms throughout the movement. Keeping the same idea, at the same time, the 1905 version has more virtuosic and creative forms of variations, so that it almost looks as if Balakirev took the bare skeleton of the earlier mazurka and transcribed it into a fancier piece.

The Mazur of the 1856-57 version is written in a three-part, ABA form. It starts with an introduction, which sets up the main rhythmic pattern of the piece. The key signature indicates D major whereas the music starts with a repeated B-flat in the bass, which obscures the tonality. The primary theme is finally presented in mm. 9–16 in D major (Ex. 35). A direct transposition of the theme to A major appears in m. 17, which comes back to D major in m. 25. In mm. 41–48, Balakirev creates a variation on the theme with thick chords and octaves. The A section ends with a definite D major cadence (Ex. 37). The B section is written in B-flat major, where Balakirev

writes the secondary theme from m. 65 to m. 72. This is followed by an identically repeated theme, moved up by an octave.

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, specifically a Mazur by Balakirev. The score is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled with measure numbers 68 and 74, shows a right hand with a running scale and grace notes, and a left hand with a secondary theme. The second system, labeled with measure numbers 74 and 79, shows the same theme repeated, moved up by an octave in the right hand, while the left hand continues with the secondary theme. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 3/4.

**Example 28. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 68–79.**

This secondary theme is presented in the left hand with a running scale in the right hand and added grace notes (mm. 101–108). Immediately, Balakirev varies the secondary theme once again with a left-hand arpeggio in mm. 109–116. This time, Balakirev sneaks in a borrowed minor chord in m. 112 and 116. The cadence in B-flat major naturally overlaps with the B-flat of the introduction when it comes back in m. 117.



8

100

*leggieramente*

105

*f risoluto*

111

117

*f*

**Example 29. Mazur, 1856-57, mm.100–124.**

From m. 117 to m. 172, it is merely a repetition of the A section, keeping the identical tonality. Balakirev sums up the piece with a coda starting from m. 173, using the primary theme idea. A long D pedal is used from m. 289 until the end, and it is presented with the main rhythmic pattern in the bass.

289 *ritard.*  
*ppp*

295 *calando* *sf* *sf*

302

**Example 30. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 289–308.**

In terms of structural form, the Mazurka from the piece written in 1905 is more complex. Balakirev avoids definite cadences and connects the sections. Compared to the earlier version that was an ABA form, Balakirev repeats the secondary theme briefly in the returning A section and expands the D pedal from the coda. Therefore, it is rather like an ABA' form. The primary theme is presented in five different variations throughout the movement. The secondary theme is varied five times in the B section. In opposition to the earlier version, the fragmented secondary theme returns in mm. 239–242 in B major, and it then returns in mm. 247–252 in D major. Also, the D pedal is extended, and this appears right from the beginning of the coda in m. 257 that is obsessively used until the end.

The returning A section is where we can trace the development and maturation of Balakirev's compositional technique over fifty years. The fascinating feature about this section is that compared to the earlier version, where we see a mere repetition of the A section, this version is now turned into a theme with flourishing ornamentations and harmonic variations created through dissonances, with a wider use of register. Balakirev used much freer and more diverse variations of the two themes that derive from the coda. During this process, Balakirev achieves coherence by using the unceasing running triplet notes as accompaniment starting from m. 213, where the primary theme is stated in the top voice.



**Example 31. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 213–220.**

Also, Balakirev changes the character of the linking passage deliberately. This linking passage, both in his Mazurs from 1856-57 (mm. 49–56, mm. 165–172) and 1905, when presented earlier in mm. 51–58, has a thick and bold texture with a vigorous character (Ex. 29, 30). However, in the A' section, in order to maintain the coherence of the mood and unceasing triplets, he switches this whole section into a soft *p* dynamic starting from m. 225 (Ex. 31).

47

53

61

*morendo*

*pp*

Example 32. Mazur, 1856-57 mm. 47-67.

47

53

59

*passionato*

*ff*

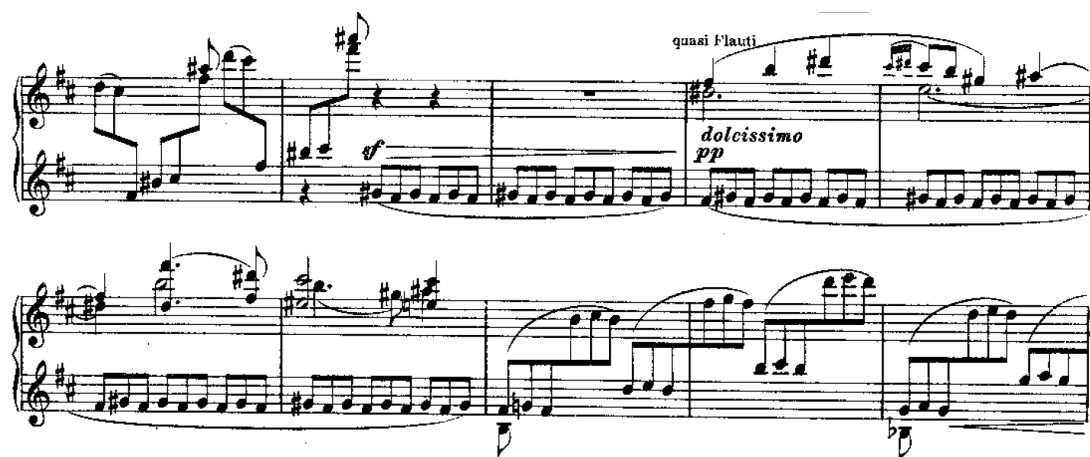
*mf*

Example 33. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 47-59.



Example 34. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 221–230.

These running triplets drive us to the fragment of the secondary theme in m. 239 and to the coda (Ex. 32, 34).



Example 35. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 236–245.

Example 36. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 168–178.

Example 37. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 256–265.

Compared to the earlier Mazurka, where the coda starts with identical rhythmic movement as those heard in the beginning (Ex. 33), in the 1905 version, the triplet rhythm proceeds through the coda as well. Also, the D pedal present from the beginning of the coda is still noticeable.

Apart from the structural difference, the most apparent differences in terms of compositional technique found in the 1905 versions are thus:

- 1) Achieving smoother transitions through gradual preparation.
- 2) Diverse variations of the repeated patterns - through ornamentations, arpeggios, and rhythmic variations.
- 3) Thicker textures achieved by using chords, especially the seventh chords.
- 4) Detailed musical indications - in terms of tempo markings, dynamics, expressive markings, and descriptions. (such as *appassionato*, *quasi flauti* etc.)

These four features appear from the very opening of the Mazurka.

**Tempo di Mazurka**

The musical score is for a piece in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system (measures 1-8) shows a piano introduction. The right hand has a whole rest in measure 1, followed by a half note G4 in measure 2, and then a series of eighth notes. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The second system (measures 9-15) continues the melody with more complex rhythmic patterns and chords. The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

**Example 38. Mazur, 1856-7, mm. 1–15.**



**Example 39. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 1–14.**

The bass line of the earlier version is simple and repetitive. The transition from the opening to the D major theme is interrupted by the fermata (Ex. 35). This primitive passage is refined with full chords and octaves, as well as the chromatic notes that function as leading tones to the next harmony (Ex. 36). Thus, Balakirev eliminated the unnecessary fermata and an awkward pause in between the sections. Also, Balakirev creates a rhythmic variation in mm. 3–4 in the later version, which creates the hemiola and natural placement of the leading tone right before switching to the next harmony. Furthermore, Balakirev specifies the metronome marking in the later version. Also, Balakirev rearranges the primary theme into a form that is more comfortable for hands, and he separates the D in the bass from the upper voices (Ex. 25, m. 9). By doing this, Balakirev avoids using the tonic repeatedly, and he provides more layers over syncopated percussive D that adds liveliness to the Mazurka.

The sudden shift created by the two-measure rests and a definite cadence between the sections (Ex. 37) is smoothed in the later version (Ex. 38) with stepwise motion and suspensions.





Example 42. Mazur, 1856-57, mm. 22–34.

Example 43. Mazurka, 1905, mm. 22–34.

By comparing Ex. 39 with Ex. 32 and 40, we can also observe how Balakirev became more specific in his musical indications. In m. 239 (Ex. 32), Balakirev even inserts *quasi flauti* (like flutes), alluding to the orchestral sound. The textural thickening and numerous variations in the accompaniment part may have developed while Balakirev was composing orchestral pieces, such as his Symphony No. 1 in C major (1899) or Tamara (1882).

## Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

Among the three sonatas Balakirev composed, this essay focuses on the two published ones (1856–1857 and 1905) and analyzed how Balakirev practiced using the sonata form in his personal way. More specifically, by comparing the two mazurka movements, it analyzes the differences and musical developments that Balakirev achieved during this fifty-year term.

First of all, the overall characteristic of these sonatas is that all are written in B-flat minor, in addition to the Scherzo no. 2 into which he adapted the secondary theme of his 1856–57 sonata. It looks like he had a special affinity for this certain key. Furthermore, his attempt to Russify the sonata form can be found in his thematic materials that often contain Russian folk song materials. Descending stepwise motions, in particular, are often found in the Russian folk song, which Balakirev applied in his themes in both sonatas. Balakirev tends not to stay in a certain key for long, but he switches back and forth while repeating the thematic material. His overall tonal scheme in these sonatas does not necessarily follow the traditional sonata structure. Instead, he often takes advantage of the enharmonic notes to transpose the section to a remote key or make a sudden switch to an unexpected key. The first movement of the 1856-57 sonata moves from B-flat minor to E major using the enharmonic note, whereas the secondary theme of the first movement from the 1905 sonata is recapitulated in the submediant, G-flat major. Furthermore, he particularly favored long dominant pedals, which enables him to move to other tonalities with the help of the secondary dominant. It is noteworthy that the first movements of both sonatas end in major. Additionally, both used the Mazurka for the second movement, as if to replace the scherzo movement of a symphony.

The most definite difference between these two sonatas is that Balakirev's music became much more elaborate, organic in the later work. First of all, compared to his earlier sonatas, orientalism is much more apparent in his 1905 sonata. Also, probably affected by his personal crisis in the 1870s, the first movement is more meditative and introspective compared to the

grand Allegro movements of his earlier sonatas. Also, his formal structure is less conventional. The first movement of the 1905 sonata starts with a fugue, then the intermezzo movement returns in the development of the finale and to sum up the whole sonata with the similar motive used in the cadenza of the first movement. Overall, although his tonal scheme may be exceptional, the sonata is more organic due to the gradual preparation of the transitions and pairing certain key relationships, as seen in the coda of the first movement, alternating between G-flat major and B major. When thematic materials are repeated, Balakirev deals with them much more deliberately in his later sonata by using rhythmic variation, added dissonances, ornamented figurations, and extensive counterpoint. This often leads to the pieces' requiring virtuosic pianistic technique in a way that was absent in his earlier sonatas. Also, he includes much more detailed musical indications, like specific metronome markings for each movement. Finally, the texture becomes thicker and dissonance increases because he uses more seventh chords in his later work.

Studying Balakirev's sonatas has significance for several reasons. Firstly, having said that Balakirev was the spiritual leader of the Mighty Handful, it is interesting to observe how he tried to present Russian folklore music using the "sonata," which is the most conventional and typical genre of Western music. Secondly, because of their identical thematic material, analyzing the Mazurka movements would be a suitable way to discover the stylistic evolution between these two periods of Balakirev compositions. Considering the fact that the last sonata was written fifty years later than the previous one, examining the Mazurka movements is very meaningful. Lastly, Balakirev's Piano Sonata in B-flat minor from 1905 is the only sonata for piano solo and one of the largest piano pieces written by the Mighty Handful, apart from Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition. However, analyses and sources that study this piece are inexplicably scarce, necessitating this study. The performances and recordings of this piece are very rare compared to its significance. Finding sources wholly dedicated to this piece was challenging and even more difficult for his earlier sonatas. However, I think Balakirev's sonatas deserve much more attention. Also, as I stated in the introduction, establishing unified titles for each of the sonatas is

necessary. Therefore, I hope this study will help clarify the distinction among the three piano sonatas by Balakirev and provide historical background and a thorough analysis of Balakirev's music for potential performers.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

- Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich. *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniĭ Dlia Fortepiano*. Edited by K. Sorokin. Moskva: Gos. muzykal'noe izd-vo, 1951.
- Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich. *Russkie Narodnye Pesni: Dlia Odnogo Golosa s Soprovozhdeniem Fortepiano*. Edited by E. V Gippius. Moskva: Gos. Muzykal'noe izd-vo, 1957.
- Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich. *Sonata in B-flat minor*, op. 5 for piano. Budapest: Könemann, n.d.
- Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich. *Sonate: B Moll, Pour Le Piano*. Frankfurt: Musikverlag Wilhelm Zimmermann, 1905.
- Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich et al. *14 Russian Songs: For Voice and Piano: (medium High)*. New York: International Music Co., 2005.
- Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich. *66 Russian Folk Songs*. New York: Kalmus, 1974.

### Secondary Sources

- Amari. *The Five: The Evolution of the Russian School of Music*. New York: International Universities Press, 1959.
- Bailey, James. *Three Russian Lyric Folk Song Meters*. Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1993.
- Breheda, Vera. *The Original Solo Piano Works of Mily Balakirev*. Thesis (D.M.A.), University of Washington, 1983.
- Garden, Edward. *Balakirev: A Critical Study of His Life and Music*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967.
- Brown, David. *Russian Masters 1: Glinka, Borodin, Balakirev, Musorgsky, Tchaikovsky*. London: Macmillan, 1986.
- Prokhorov, Vadim. *Russian Folk Songs: Musical Genres and History*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2002.
- Ridenour, Robert C. *The Rivalry Among the Balakirev Circle, Alexander Serov, and the Russian Musical Society In the 1860's*. Thesis (Ph. D.), Indiana University, 1977.
- Rogger, Hans. *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- Sears, Ilene Hanson. *The Russian Five: An Analysis of Style as Shown in Selected Piano Works*. Thesis (M.M.), Indiana University.
- Seroff, Victor. *The Mighty Five: The Cradle of Russian National Music*. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1970.

Swan, Alfred J. *Notes on the Old Liturgical Chant of the Russian Church and the Russian Folk Song*. Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1967.

Walsh, Stephen. *Musorgsky and His Circle: A Russian Musical Adventure*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.

Zetlin, M. O., and Olga Oushakoff. "Balakirev." *The Russian Review* 4, no. 1 (1944): 67-82.  
doi:10.2307/125356.

### **Recording**

Balakirev, Miliĭ Alekseevich and Nicholas Walker. *Complete Piano Works*. 1. [S.l.]: Grand Piano, 2013.